Choose from one of the below essay topics. You can bring into the exam one 3 x 5 index card that has up to 25 words. Your essay should have a clear thesis (a position). Use evidence that you can tie directly to your thesis to support your view. Remember that a good essay does not ignore evidence that is contrary to their viewpoint but tries to minimize its impact (don’t ignore the elephant in the room). Be careful with your facts since you have a chance to review the topics and evidence in advance it’s expected that you are well acquainted with the material. Likewise don’t just give facts. This is a thesis based essay so the ideas and facts should tie together.

Essay 1

Historians often debate the role of the individual in making broad changes to a society.  Some say that certain individuals have been critical to the changes that took place in a society, others say that these individuals were merely a product of their times (in other words-there was nothing unique about these individuals that led to the dramatic changes in their respective societies and the resulting long term consequences would’ve happened regardless).

Using 3 to 4 leaders we've studied in class (several of whom you may choose from are listed below) discuss the role of leadership in society and whether leaders are critical to change or merely a reflection of the times.  In responding to this question, make sure you define who the leader was, when they led, what they did and what society/culture they were a part of.

1. Pericles

2. Lycurgus

3. Cincinnatus

4. Augustus Caesar

5. Constantine

6. Charlemagne

7. William the Conqueror

Essay 2

One of the most contentious issues in modern society is the role of religion in society.  Over this past semester we discussed several instances where governmental leaders and religious leaders or groups have conflicted.

Using 3 to 4 examples that we've studied in class discuss what are the respective roles of government and religion in society.  Your essay must include some discussion of the issues that Kings and Popes fought about during the period known as the late Middle Ages.

1. The trial of Socrates

2. Judiasm under Roman Rule

3. Christianity pre and post Constantine

4. The division of the Eastern and Western Christian Church

5. Pope Gregory VII and Henry IV

6. Avignon Papacy